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SUBJECT: (U) Secretary Clinton's March 23, 2009 meeting
with Nigerian Foreign Minister Ojo Maduekwe

11. Classified by AF Acting Assistant Secretary Phillip
Carter, Acting. Reasons: 1.4 (b), (d)

12. (U) Monday, March 23, 2009; 11:00 a.m; Washington DC

13. (U) Participants:

U.S.
The Secretary
AF A/S Phil Carter, Acting
PA A/S Robert Wood, Acting
Andrew Silski (AF/W notetaker)

Nigeria
Foreign Minister Ojo Maduekwe
SFRC Chairman Jibril Aminu
HFAC Chairman Umar Bature
Senate Education Committee Chair Joy Emordi
MFA State Secretary Eni Onobu
Embassy Charge Amb. Baba Gana Wakil

14. (U) SUMMARY. The Secretarys inaugural meeting with
Nigerian Foreign Minister Maduekwe focused on promoting
African regional security cooperation, especially on
peacekeeping, democracy, and good governance. The
Secretary praised Nigerias constructive role in these
areas. Both sides agreed to raise the profile of the
bilateral partnership, particularly through the re-
establishment of working groups to engage regularly and
address issues of mutual concern. END SUMMARY.

REGIONAL SECURITY

15. (C) Secretary Clinton welcomed FM Maduekwe to
Washington and stressed the importance of broadening and
deepening bilateral ties for reasons of trade,
democracy, security, and other matters of mutual
concern. The Secretary said the U.S. - Nigeria
relationship is at the convergence of how the Obama
Administration wishes to reach out to other countries
and noted it is impossible to imagine a stable,
democratic, and prosperous Africa without Nigeria as the
linchpin. Seeing powerful symbolism behind this
inaugural meeting, FM Maduekwe praised the Secretary,
who he noted is highly celebrated in Africa for her
passion and commitment to the continent.

16. (C) The Secretary highlighted Nigerias admirable
efforts in condemning coups in Guinea and Mauritania and
violence in Guinea-Bissau. On Somalia, the Secretary
hoped the Government of Nigeria (GoN) could continue its
efforts to promote peacekeeping and security in Africa,
notwithstanding the pressure of increasingly difficult
global economic conditions. On Sudan, she solicited GoN
pressure on President Bashir to reverse or mitigate his
expulsion of NGOs, so as not to inflict further harm.

17. (C) FM Maduekwe responded that, as chair for Nigeria
of the African Unions Peace and Security Committee, he

agreed that Nigeria is on the same page regarding Bashir and that the world had moved on from using sovereignty as a shield of impunity. Although Nigeria had requested a one-year deferment of the ICJ decision on Bashir in order to work on peace and justice issues, the UN had a duty to ensure that the human tragedy in Sudan was lessened.

18. (C) Alluding to Nigerias prompt cession of the Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon according to a World Court decision, Maduekwe said Nigeria was a historically peaceful country that when necessary was ready to deploy troops, particularly as Africas largest peacekeeping nation.

He admitted the GoN publicly committed to peacekeeping duties in Somalia, but not to peace enforcement, which is what Nigerias missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone had been. Maduekwe promised the GoN would work in that direction, but suggested the USG should look more deeply into addressing Nigerias technical concerns for such a deployment, as well as staffing gaps in the current Somalia mission.

BILATERAL AGENDA

19. (C) The Foreign Minister wished to raise the profile of the bilateral relationship through the establishment of a binational commission, similar to what existed during the Clinton Administration. He said Nigerias strength depended on its ability to deal with the oil-rich Niger Delta, polio, HIV/AIDS, education, transparency, and corruption. The Secretary very much welcomed the proposal to establish a bilateral working group that would meet regularly to seek positive outcomes. She reiterated that a strong U.S. - Nigeria partnership was key for Africa and the world.

110. (C) Maduekwe stressed the GoNs need to build capacity and opined that fighting corruption, for example, was a matter of national survival. He believed that past USG policy on this issued involved a certain amount of over-personalization, and that the USG needed to turn the page. The question was, how to engage. The Secretary noted that every country faced corruption, but the issue was whether it is made manageable instead of leading to lawlessness, lack of national allegiances, and an unsustainable situation. She cited the need to break the link between unsustainable remuneration for public service and corrupt practices. She proposed to connect specific proposals for engagement with changes, noting Nigerias Economic and Financial Crimes Commission used to obtain hundreds of convictions annually, and now it achieved very few.

111. (C) The Secretary hoped that their two presidents might be able to meet later this year, provided Nigeria first showed progress on key issues raised during the December 2007 presidential meeting. In agreement, FM Maduekwe said that Nigeria, as the ultimate gateway and destination in Africa, wanted to be an agent for major change.

CLINTON